

§ 105-243.1. Collection of tax debts.

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Overdue tax debt. – Any part of a tax debt that remains unpaid 90 days or more after it becomes collectible under G.S. 105-241.22. The term does not include a tax debt for which the taxpayer entered into an installment agreement for the tax debt under G.S. 105-237 within 90 days after the tax debt became collectible, if the taxpayer has not failed to make any payments due under the installment agreement.
- (2) Tax debt. – The total amount of tax, penalty, and interest collectible under G.S. 105-241.22.

(b) Outsourcing. – The Secretary may contract for the collection of tax debts owed by nonresidents and foreign entities. At least 30 days before the Department submits a tax debt to a contractor for collection, the Department must notify the taxpayer by mail that the debt may be submitted for collection if payment is not received within 30 days after the notice was mailed.

(b1) [Outsourcing Limitation. –] In determining the liability of any person for a tax, the Secretary may not employ an agent who is compensated in whole or in part by the State for services rendered on a contingent basis or any other basis related to the amount of tax, interest, or penalty assessed against or collected from the person.

(c) Secrecy. – A contract for the collection of tax debts is conditioned on compliance with G.S. 105-259. If a contractor violates G.S. 105-259, the contract is terminated, and the Secretary must notify the contractor of the termination. A contractor whose contract is terminated for violation of G.S. 105-259 is not eligible for an award of another contract under this section for a period of five years from the termination. These sanctions are in addition to the criminal penalties set out in G.S. 105-259.

(d) Fee. – A collection assistance fee is imposed on an overdue tax debt that remains unpaid 30 days or more after the fee notice required by this subsection is mailed to the taxpayer. In order to impose a collection assistance fee on a tax debt, the Department must notify the taxpayer that the fee will be imposed if the tax debt is not paid in full within 30 days after the date the fee notice was mailed to the taxpayer. The Department may not mail the fee notice earlier than 60 days after the tax debt becomes collectible under G.S. 105-241.22. The fee is collectible as part of the debt. The Secretary may waive the fee pursuant to G.S. 105-237 to the same extent as if it were a penalty.

The amount of the collection assistance fee is twenty percent (20%) of the amount of the overdue tax debt. If a taxpayer pays only part of an overdue tax debt, the payment is credited proportionally to fee revenue and tax revenue.

(e) Use. – The fee is a receipt of the Department and must be applied to the costs of collecting and reducing the incidence of overdue tax debts. The proceeds of the fee must be credited to a special account within the Department and may be expended only as provided in this subsection. The proceeds of the fee may not be used for any purpose that is not directly and primarily related to collecting and reducing the incidence of overdue tax debts. The Department may apply the proceeds of the fee for the purposes listed in this subsection. The remaining proceeds of the fee may be spent only pursuant to appropriation by the General Assembly. The fee proceeds do not revert but remain in the special account until spent for the purposes listed in this subsection. The Department and the Office of State Budget and Management must account for all expenditures using accounting procedures that clearly distinguish costs allocable to the purposes listed in this subsection from costs allocable to other purposes and must demonstrate that none of the fee proceeds are used for any other purpose.

The Department may apply the fee proceeds for the following purposes:

- (1) To pay (i) contractors for collecting overdue tax debts under subsection (b) of this section and (ii) auditors responsible for identifying overdue tax debts.
- (2) To pay the fee the United States Department of the Treasury charges for setoff to recover tax owed to North Carolina.
- (3) To pay for taxpayer locator services, not to exceed three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) a year.
- (4) To pay for postage or other delivery charges for correspondence directly and primarily relating to collecting overdue tax debts, not to exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) a year.
- (5) To pay for operating expenses for Project Collection Tax and the Taxpayer Assistance Call Center.
- (6) To pay for expenses of the Examination and Collection Division directly and primarily relating to collecting overdue tax debts.
- (7) To pay the direct and indirect expenses of information technology upgrades to the Department of Revenue computer systems that are intended to upgrade Department of Revenue capabilities to (i) allow for electronic filing of returns by taxpayers and the electronic issuance of refunds by the Department for all remaining tax schedules and (ii) accomplish other mission-critical information technology tasks of the Department as approved by the Office of State Budget and Management in consultation with the State CIO.

(f) Reports. – The report of Department activities required by G.S. 105-256 contains information on the Department's efforts to collect tax debts and its use of the proceeds of the collection assistance fee. (2001-380, ss. 2, 8; 2002-126, s. 22.2; 2003-349, s. 3; 2004-124, ss. 23.2(a), 23.3(c); 2004-170, s. 22.5; 2005-276, ss. 22.1(a), 22.1(b), 22.6(a); 2006-66, ss. 19.2, 19.3(a); 2007-323, s. 6.9(a); 2007-491, s. 33; 2012-152, s. 1; 2012-194, s. 61.5(b); 2014-3, s. 10.1(d); 2014-100, s. 26.1; 2015-109, s. 1; 2015-241, s. 28.2.)